

THE

NASSAU MONTHLY.

VOL. VI.]

MARCH, 1847.

[No. V.

GENIUS.

IN taking a view of the past we see some characters who have raised themselves to the very acme of renown—whose productions cannot be contemplated, without wonder and astonishment; and whose fame comes down to posterity in one unbroken chain, each age adding a new link and fresh lustre by its just admiration. On the other hand their contemporaries breathing the same atmosphere, possessing the same or superior advantages, have left no monument of their existence; leaving posterity to infer that they lived as drones and died as worthless weeds on a luxuriant soil. In searching for a cause why this marked distinction; why but few of earth's countless millions have been permitted to dazzle the world with the brilliancy of their attainments, we are irresistibly forced to the conclusion, however partial it may seem, that nature has not been equal in bestowing those powers, necessary for great and grand achievements.

This natural gift we denominate genius—the great platform upon which rests the fame of the most illustrious characters that the world ever produced. But as in the mineral kingdom we have rubies, as well as diamonds, whose sparkling brilliancy is perfect; so in the world of mind, we have geniuses of an imperfect order, as well as those, which, by their own beaming light, and capaciousness, dispel clouds of obscurity and grasp truths remote, as if by intuition. True genius alone will receive our attention.

This species of genius is possessed by the painter; aided by colors, he can give form and shape to our ideas—all those images which pass before the mind of the historic reader, which swell the patriot's breast, or which fill his soul with the detestation of tyranny, are sketched with the exactness of truth. The tragical, grand and sublime events of olden time, which are circuitously introduced to the mind through the pages of history, are, as it were, re-created by him, and exhibited in open view. There has been no event beyond the conceptions of the painter and the delineation of his magic pencil. His genius, delights to visit both the past and the future. At times the crucifixion and death of the world's Saviour, is exhibited to the view in that impressive manner, which crowds the soul with the unutterable feelings that thrilling scene would naturally inspire: again unwilling to await the perfection of time, it ushers from behind the curtain of the future the opening of the sixth seal, as beheld in the vision of the inspired divine, and the appalling circumstances of the sun becoming black, the moon blood, the stars falling, the heavens departing as a scroll when rolled together, and the mountains and islands moving.

But the past and future are not most inviting to the painter's genius. The present is the great field for his proudest triumphs. The earth with her variegated mountain beauties; her enchanting valleys, her pearly streams, her cities crowded with busy multitudes—all her beauties or deformities which can delight or surprise, have been portrayed by the skillful hand of the artist. And the ocean, while with the flags of peace and commerce, tamely bearing on her bosom the wealth of nations; or crimson with the blood of war and thrown into tempestuous commotion, swallowing up the pride of man, is, as it were, transferred from its original resting place to the canvass.

Nor are his powers confined to external objects, but man, the masterpiece of God's creation, becomes the object of his pencil. No age or condition of life can elude his genius. At the touch of his pencil the tender babe at its mother's breast, the aged father with his furrowed cheek, are reflected and made to live as it were, on the encased parchment. Thus the smiles of the infant and familiar countenance of the father, are preserved, though their bodies are returned to dust. The various passions which agitate the soul, are

caught by the painter and made to assume an image. Thus that incomparable production which emanated from Appelles, "the half slain mother shuddering with fear lest her eager babe should suck the milk 'of death' from her palsied breast." Here is displayed the power of the painter in the astonishing effects of his productions. When this painting was witnessed by Macedon's madman, the old world's conqueror, his flinty heart was softened with sympathy; his crystal eye which had never quailed in the thickest battle, was melted into a stream of gushing tears, by the silent eloquence of this perfect production.

Was the sunshine of the glory of an Alexander necessary to produce the genius of Appelles; or was the mellow harvest time of Pericles requisite for the fostering and full development of other illustrious geniuses: no genius flourishes not best in the conqueror's path; nor where the breath of civilization has blighted nature's beauties—but where nature exists uncorrupted, and undistorted. This has been verified in our own happy country. When this land could afford no school of art—ere the rich forest was made to tremble before the axe of the hind—when savages and wild beasts were lord proprietors of hill and dale, it was then that the genius of a Copeley and West beamed forth, notwithstanding the surrounding darkness. Their fame is known to the intelligent world and will continue, so long as the earth retains a vestige of civilization. In contrast turn to the reign of Henry the Eighth of England. The painters of his court possessed every advantage which the age could afford, which the profuseness of a royal hand could lend, yet their productions were grotesque—a mere burlesque on nature. Though they represented gilded kings with golden crowns—gilded angels with golden haloes—gilded virgins sitting upon golden clouds nursing golden children—the heavens above being old and the earth beneath, they wanted that power which was inherent in a West to portray the slightest accents of joy which light and cheer the countenance; and that god-like power of an American Greenough to make the quarried marble glow with animation and beam with intelligence.

As it is true that genius is possessed by the painter, it is likewise true that it lives, speaks and acts in the poet. Genius is for the mental eye of the poet what the microscope is to the eye of the body; it makes the smallest speck

to become a peopled globe. As the chemist by the combination of materials forms a compound which bursts asunder the strongest bands of nature; so the poet, by the blending of simple words, storms the fortified heart and with power unspeakable subjects the whole man.

Genius is quicksilver, and language a polished surface, with which the poet, as mechanic, forms a mirror reflecting the face and heart of the world. But it is not the mechanic who is skilled in working precious metals, nor he who can add a brighter lustre to the diamond; but it is he who can open the face of the heart, and is perfectly conversant with the winding chain of self-interest, which sets in operation every wheel which turns in that complicated machinery of the passions. Such a mechanic and poet was the immortal Shakspeare, another and more appropriate name for genius, than genius itself. Justly has he been styled the master of the human heart, the poet of the British Isles, the plenipotentiary of the whole human race, who speaks and acts in the name of every individual without particular instructions from any.

His comedy is a populous city inhabited by all nations and every class and order of mankind from the indigent grave digger to the supercilious lord. Here dwells the ancient Greek and Roman, the modern Frenchman and Englishman, the philosopher and idiot, the legislator and man of business, each exhibiting his peculiar national characteristic and distinguishing occupation and habits of life. While "his tragedy is a living picture of all the minute and secret artifices by which a feeling steals into the soul, of all the perceptible advantages which it there gains, of all the stratagems by which other passions are made subservient to it, till it becomes the sole tyrant of our feelings and aversions."

Some blinded admirers of Shakspeare have compiled extracts from his works, which they term the "Beauties of Shakspeare." But such a volume is a methodical slander. As well might they attempt to gather the beauties of the departed sun which gild the western hills, which sparkle on the waves of the sea and shine on the eastern clouds. The beauties of Shakspeare are the beauties of nature. He who would gather a nosegay from the garden of Shakspeare's blossoms, as a just representation of his vast fields of flowers, rivalling the beauty of the rainbow, with their ten thousand

hues, is like a man who would exhibit a brick or single stone as a specimen of a magnificent temple, whose turrets pierce the clouds and whose grandeur sheds a lustre upon surrounding objects. A student of Shakspeare studies the geography of man, and aided by his maps and drawings, he can trace every river of the character in its sinuosities, bound every province and find every city of the passions which are in the empire of the human heart. How important are his works—how powerful his genius, "and how worthy is he to be called a demigod in strength, in profundity of view a prophet, in all-seeing wisdom a protecting spirit of the highest order."

The blind poet too as he has been designated, is a striking illustration of the power of genius. Shakspeare's career seems to have been a spring-day in dreary winter; his genius shined with its own cheering beauty, with but few clouds to obscure. But Milton's career was a stormy summer day; his genius rose and revolved in its orbit mid-way and past with beauty and grandeur; but the clouds of disappointment, the winds of adversity, and the thunders and lightnings of malevolence and detraction, spent their fury to obscure and enshroud in darkness and disgrace its setting; but such opposition was as a cloud of smoke stretched across the path of the sun which only serves better to define its disc and heighten the magnificence of its setting.

Thus when old, blind, and scoffed at by his country, Atlas-like, he did not sink under the load of indignation which was heaped upon him by a vitiated people, as did the great Cicero in similar circumstances, but with Socratesian tranquillity, retired to a lonely hovel and produced the most sublime poem ever penned by man. What a colossal mind, what a gigantic genius did he possess—equal if possible to that which his own creative power ascribed to Beelzebub, when he makes him stand against the sword of Michael, against the thunders of Jehovah, against the flaming lake, and marl burning with solid fire, resting on his own innate energies.

Such a monument of genius surrounded by similar circumstances, never has and probably never will appear again. The poetry of the present day in comparison with that of Milton, is like a mill-boy's whistle compared to the enrapturing music of an Italian band. Or like the small whirl-

wind which we see in the fire place, scarcely able to raise a feather or wind the smoke in its whirl, compared to the startled whirlwind of the north, which raises the masterly oak from his firm position, and bears it aloft as an evidence of its might. Spencer glides along like the shadow of a cloud, softly traversing hill and dale; Milton rushes with the impetuous force and motion of the sun itself, giving heat and light as well as pleasure to the mind.

But it is not always thus with genius; as mighty and vast as it is, it can be perverted; and then it becomes a sickle, to make stubble of human happiness, a roaring tempest to make desolate the enchanting groves of delight, a moth to cut the white robe of virtue. Thus it was with the most extraordinary genius of the nineteenth century, Lord Byron. Although poor and deformed by nature, a slave to the most vile and unholy passions, the most perfect misanthrope, an infidel, and every thing that degrades man and destroys the only god-like part of his nature, the intellect; his genius triumphed over all these circumstances which disarm common minds and raised him to the highest honour. But his honour was "like a thermometer in fickle weather constantly rising and falling"—a true index of ill gained fame. How could it have been otherwise with a poet whose most labored production is like a stream of burning lava rolled from Mount *Ætna*, consuming every thing in its destructive flow. Thus it was, but had his genius not been perverted, it might have been like the inundation of the Nile, fertilizing the heart for a golden harvest.

According to the divine rule—"Judge the tree by its fruits," we would call Lord Byron, the upas tree of Europe, whose trunk is large, whose roots are strong and deep, whose branches are many and beautiful, and whose shade is intense. It might be a lovely tree, but its effects are inevitable death. No soft vine entwines its body! no tender plant is protected by its shade; it stands alone visited only by the winds, the sun's beams, and the falling rains, nature's impartial blessing. How sorrowful the fact, that, a genius great, grand, and powerful, as if struck from heaven for some noble purpose, should "infest the world with its outpourings," and enshroud itself in a veil of disgrace and eternal destitution.

But the most noble species of genius is that of the philosopher. The poet can build a fame of "airy nothing," out of

the workings of his imagination, upon the ghosts of his fancy, which he makes to stalk at mid-night, or sylphs which he gives an existence in the air. But the philosopher must deal in truth, stern, unbending reality. To determine what is, and not what may be, is his province. And such a philosopher was he whom Pope styles, the wisest, the brightest and meanest of mankind, but whom gratitude demands should be styled the father of philosophy and benefactor of mankind, Lord Bacon. By his inherent powers, Hercules-like, he chained with his own hands the tri-headed Cerberus which guarded the temple of Aristotelian philosophy; burst asunder the strong bands of civil and religious authority which bound it together; rent the veil of speculation, and from the light of his own genius alone, discovered that true gem of philosophy deeply hid in nature, and obscured by the rubbish of past ages, which sheds a beam of light upon every other system of philosophy and science, and which may truly be called the nucleus of the present improved state of learning. An attempt to say anything in commendation of the talents of this most brilliant star in the firmament of England's renown, would be, in the language of Shakspeare, as preposterous, as an effort,

"To gild refined gold, to paint the lilly,
To throw a perfume on the violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish."

As a natural Philosopher of unrivalled genius, Sir Isaac Newton stands pre-eminent. Though some writers of eminence assert that he borrowed light from the investigations of Bacon, which enabled him to discover the occult laws of nature which he has revealed, yet the events of his life are conclusive that he was a star of the first magnitude and did not shine with borrowed light. The fall of apples has been under the observation of man ever since disobedient Eve plucked the first one, until Newton's day, but to discover from that simple fact the laws of gravitation, which influence all created worlds and things, was left for his own transcendent genius. Thus unaided by Lord Bacon, unaided by man or man's works, the fall of an apple suggested to his mind this great Law, and his genius was enabled to leap from earth through space infinite to other worlds, and determine with

mathematical precision the laws by which they are governed—
an application to him, well may the poet say,

“measured are the skies!
Stars are detected in their deep recesses!
Creation widens! vanquished nature yields!
Her secrets are extorted! ‘Genius’ prevails!”

Although the triumphs of genius are almost superhuman, yet has genius exhausted nature, discovered all her hidden treasures, drawn aside the veil covering all her mysteries? No; the Earth has beauty yet, for the painter, the “wild watery sea” still possesses sublimity for the poet, and for the philosopher, hidden nature contains sublime truths yet to be discovered, phenomena yet to be explained, secrets yet untold, heights and depths never yet attained by man.

MONTEZUMA.—A TRAGEDY.

Persons represented:

Montezuma. The Mexican Emperor.

Nezhuapil. King of Tezcuco.

Itzlan. King of Tlacopan.

Cacama, } Nephews of Montezuma, the former suc-
Guatemozin, } cessor of Nezhuapil.

Cuilahua. Montezuma's brother.

Mitzli. Mexican High Priest.

Teutlile. Governor of a province.

Inferior Caciques.

Nobleman in attendance.

Apparition of Papautsin. Montezuma's sister.

Couriers.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—(The grand square of Mexico. Sacrifice to the Mexican patron-God. Procession of priests seen slowly ascending the Teocalli or temple. Victims garlanded with flowers. The procession reaches the summit amid acclamations from the multitude beneath. Victims stripped of garlands and delivered to the presiding priests. Sacrifice commences.)

SCENE II.—(An apartment in Montemuzza's palace. Montezuma pacing rapidly to and fro. At the sound of approaching footsteps, he pauses and turns eagerly towards the door.) *Enter the High-priest Metzli.*

MONTEZUMA.— Speak, Metzli !
What answer does the god vouchsafe to us ?

METZ.—My sovereign none. The martial god is dumb—
Though his dread altar smokes with sacrifice
And hearts are reeking in his gory censer.
Our prayers too, and invocations frequent,
With rites of mystic import, avail not.
Huitzlipotchli* sits in stony state
Relentless. Us his chosen servants
He spurns, and our sweet-savored offering,
So did we importune with solemn acts
Of bloody and unbloody sanctity
All-prevalent erst, that even the very walls
And base of his stern sanctuary
Did seem to soften with propitious fervor
All, but the flinty visage of the God.

MON.— Say you so ?
Not even an intimation, that may serve
As clue to this deep-rooted mystery ?
It cannot be. Why look you, Metzli,
Such ominous silence of our oracle
Would bode more, be itself a deeper mystery
Than that which sits dark—brooding o'er our realm,
Hatching strange rumors and distracting thoughts,
What ! to thus abandon his own offspring,
Disdaining their petitions—and that too
When need most clamors ! He, the honored patron
Of this bright pearl of cities, Tenochtitlan ! †
The pride and glory of our fair domain !
Whose fires burn nightly on a thousand temples !
Whose altars steam with a perpetual incense !
It cannot be. Or true,
It argues for the matter we would solve
A depth and meaning that we dreamt not of,
What think you ?

METZ.—Dread liege, to like conclusion

* The Mexican war-god. † Name for the present city Mexico.

Our own surmisings tend. And portents other
 To which no special meaning did attach,
 Now gleam an import from this ominous silence,
 Forboding, in our faith, some dire calamity
 That shall o'erwhelm the empire.

MON.— What portents mean you?

METZ.—Nine suns and moons ago, most gracious liege,
 Beside the altar of our deity
 My watch fell. The city far below
 Slept in deep silence—for the god of light
 Had wheeled half-way his nether track of fire—
 When lo! the sacred flame, now fiercely lambent,
 Sprang up and vanished into empty air
 Leaving no relic. I, with trembling haste,
 Rekindled from its sister altar-stone
 The mystic symbol; locking up thenceforth
 In secrecy most true the prodigy.
 This morn, ere our fair valley had put off
 Night's mantle, a wonder less equivocal
 Harrowed the fountain of my fears anew;
 For I had risen from my couch of leaves
 In expectation of the bloody rite
 To supplicate the god. But scarce had thought
 Conceived expression—not yet found utterance—
 When, speechless with amazement, I beheld
 The sacred Arrows, which our sage tradition
 Associates with the destinies of our Race,
 Fall from the stony clutches of the god
 All shattered. The rites of sacrifice o'er,
 Hastened hither at your gracious bidding
 With purpose of unfolding these events
 To your wise sovereignty.

MON.— You did well.
 Meanwhile it is our pleasure to confer
 With our sage Brother of Tezcuco.

[Exit Metzli.]

Too surely do these marvellous reports
 Go hand in hand with my presentiments,
 Presaging what, I wist not. Some fate doubtless—
 If I interpret right these characters—
 Of crushing magnitude. That shall no less
 Than wipe a nation from the scroll of being.

Whence, where, in what particular manner,
 With what direction, falls the terrible bolt—
 The Future must reveal. As yet the Evil
 Looms indistinct, expressionless and vague.
 Its presence, not its lineaments, I discern ;
 In all the horrors of expectancy
 I must abide it, for one step awry
 In the destruction that it seeks t' elude
 May prematurely overwhelm—
 The frequency too of these portentous signs
 Admonishes that the dread catastrophe
 Nears in its issue, and even now perhaps
 Is crouching over or yawns wide beneath—
 O, that the great good Being would vouchsafe
 Some more immediate voice ! This mystery,
 With its vague fears and dark forebodings,
 Its fitful glimpses of a something dreadful,
 Preys on my soul. But hold ; footsteps this way,
 Here comes our aged kinsman, reputed
 Unrivalled in the arts of prophecy
 These secrets hidden from our mortal ken
 His, haply, shall divine.

[*Enter Nezhuapil.*

(Advancing.) Welcome our royal Brother,
 The pride of Acolhua !* In whom shines
 The sunny glories of his princely line !
 Hoary in wisdom as mature in years !
 Welcome.—But how, how now. What envious cloud
 Hath overcast thee ? Ten years of trouble
 Could not have deepened thus the ruts of care
 On that bold front.

NEZ.—Great Prince, full fourscore years
 Have whitened much these locks, and marvel you
 That they have lost the glossy jet of youth ?
 Do silver hairs comport with wrinkleless brow
 Or the unfurrowed cheek ? You do but see
 The natural prints of age ; with what, the toil
 Of threescore summers spent in royalty,
 May add to the account. My golden life-dream
 Hath past away in its unclouded beauty,

* Country of which Tezcuco was the capital.

And now I walk in shadows. These warn me
That the dread night of dissolution cometh,
When I must haste to my ancestral halls,
Embrace corruption in his loathsomeness,
And sleep my long last sleep. Can'st thou wonder
That the lorn brooding spirit in me
Hath called around it Death's most cypress glooms?
That these have left their impress on my visage?

MOX.—You say true, Nezhuaphil.
Age brings white hairs. It ravages our bloom.
Digs deep its trenches. And to thoughtful souls
Who ponder much upon their destiny
Adds gloom. Yet do not overlade it
With ills bred elsewhere. Man is natural heir
To many evils. Others there are too
Capricious in th' allotment, which the god
Dispenses at his pleasure—and well I see
That some unusual and insidious power
Is lurking in the citadel of your soul,
Making sad havoc. As your friend—your lord—
We do beseech you to unbosom it.

NEZ.—Our enemy, sire, is our infirmity.
Yet if the vagary of a weak old man
On whom the frets of life have wreaked their fill,
Please aught—why, welcome,

The god Quetzalcol.*

You remember our traditions say,
Reigned once in Anahuac.† That was an age
Which our sweet singers love to celebrate—
And still it lives in their immortal lays—
A pearly age. Our hills and valleys then
Needed not tillage; for the generous earth
Brought forth untutored its prolific harvests
Of golden maize and glossy-leaved bananas,
Rich flowering cocoa, and prizeless aloe,
Copal and amber, aromatic gums,
And sweet vanilla with its spicy tribe,—
Our gardens slept in fragrance, such as fills
The habitations of those happy souls
Who sit imparadised. And from mountain-tops

* A beneficent deity of the Mexicans of whom a legend prevailed as narrated.

† Name for the present country of Mexico.

Folded away on skies of loveliest carmine
Our forests lifted their dark foliage.
Pearls too and gems were richer in their hues.
Yea, all things wore such aspect—so have I heard
My royal father say—that spirits blest
Would oft-times leave their own divine abodes
To revel here in ours. Quetzalcol too
Instructed those our happy ancestors
In arts of peace, and all the mystic lore
Of wisdom and religion. Teaching them
To love each other and learn war no more.
Having established thus his golden reign,
The blue-eyed god departed for a land
Towards the rising sun—the famed Tlapallan,
Launching his weird canoe upon the wave
That laves our eastern shore. With many tears
He bade adieu to his lorn followers,
Enjoining them to guard most sacredly
His precepts and religion—for in time
He would return, and o'er his chosen faithful
Resume dominion. Thus says tradition—
Years passed away and generations many,
But still the future uttered not its secret,
Nor voice spake o'er the silent deep of waters,
The god came not. His precepts were forgotten,
Religion sullied; and on his mild worship
Our fathers grafted their severer rites.
But now of late strange rumors are in vogue,
Men gape and whisper of dire prodigies,
Dreams steal upon the midnight wooings of slumber,
Fears haunt the working mind. The stars above
Stray from their spheres and are unruly—
But chiefly does my own prophetic spirit
Warn of some near calamity, that shall o'erwhelm
With ruin and erasure this fair empire.
Doubt it not, my Prince. Though I am grey-haired,
Oppressed with the infirmities of age.
Most weak in soul and body—doubt it not.
Quetzalcol comes. Our sovereignty totters.
Th' avenging god revisits us in wrath,
To scourge and crush, and—

[Enter a Nobleman in haste.

MON.—(Turning fiercely upon him.) How dare you thus intrude upon our sacred privacy?

NOB.—(Kneeling.) O pardon, pardon, gracious sovereign. Be not offended that our loyalty hath overstepped itself.

MON.—Rise. What would you?

NOB.—A courier has just arrived with news of moment, as his haste argues, He will impart it thro' no second ear.

MON.—Bring him in, anon.

[Exit Nob. Re-enter with Courier.

Whence come you? And with what t' impart Of such unusual urgency?

COUR.—From the extremest verge of your dominion Eastward I have come, great Emperor. My message—of what pith and consequence Your wisdom best shall judge—runs thus. A band of warlike strangers, quaintly guised In all the gay accoutrements of war, In martial vigor strong, have late arrived Upon Tobasco's coast. Their brave invaders The warriors of the nation did oppose In dreadful conflict; but with bold exploit Wielding the bolts and thunders of the god, The strangers routed their o'erweening host Making strange havoc. This achieved, and truce Of amity compounded, they again Launched their vast hulls, and with spread wings Are now careering o'er the level brine For your fair shores. Thus frightened, have I come With sweating haste, much deeming that the matter Called for despatch.

MON.—Ah, my prophetic fears.

Aside. These strangers, Of what complexion are they? How equipped? Wear they the port and seeming of the god? In truth, you did well To wing your mission with unusual speed.

COUR.—My headlong haste Instructed in the gross of these events Paused not for curious inquiry. Rumor indeed spake vaguely of these things,

Purporting, for the strangers, visage fair
And mien and stature such as old tradition
Attributes to our own Quetzalcol.
Short interval will inform more certainly
Of what your sovereignty seeks.

Mon.—Do thou return forthwith.

Bid Tentile, governor of those provinces,
Watch well these strangers; upon their landing
Entreat them hospitably, until at least
Some further intimation of our pleasure,
But more especially that he despatch
Delineations of the foreigners
And their proceedings. [Exit Courier.

Nezhuapil, these events demand
The speediest cognizance of our High Council,
To-morrow therefore let the principal caciques
Be duly summoned. [Exeunt.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

INDIVIDUAL ACTION.

"What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time,
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast—no more."

THAT is a harsh and desponding creed which contends that no man is a necessary member of society. It robs life of all its dignity and all its glory. For if our being is aimless and in vain—if the world's broad field of battle requires not the labors of each and all of us—if passive to every shifting current, and every veering wind we are swept on like idle weeds to decay and nothingness—where is the beauty and pride of existence. Surely they are but names, and well may we term that an unhappy creed which is so derogatory to the dignity and majesty of our nature. And yet some there are whose faith is firm in it, and who maintain that it has its foundations in truth and reason. They who uphold it, tell us to take the world as we find it, and ask us to reflect how few there are of whom it can be said, that it is neces-

sary for the well-being of society that they should live; and even granting, they add, that dark and trying times may call forth men who are necessary for the preservation and prosperity of States, yet such times are of rare occurrence, and the great minds to which they give birth, only form exceptions to the general rule, that no man is a necessary member of society. Is this reason? oh no. True it is, there are those who lead shameless and inglorious lives, those who live a dishonor to themselves and a dishonor to the name of man. But "all are not men who wear the human shape," and if there be some who are recreants to the high ends of life, let us not forget that there are others who act well their part, and who go down to their graves with the consciousness of having fulfilled high destinies; and of such the world will ever have need, for such it is who advance the cause of humanity. But this is not all. *Every* man is necessary in his sphere. The scriptures tell us that God created nothing in vain. Every tree and shrub and flower in external nature, every stream and river, every hill-top and mountain; yea, "every creeping thing" of earth know some supreme and eternal power which created them with reference to some great and glorious end, much more then does man live to some purpose in the world, formed in the image of his Maker, and stamped with the seal of immortality. It is true that there are different capacities for usefulness in different spheres of action. The field which is open to the labors of the husbandman is not so wide, and will not yield as much fruit as the one open to the labors of the scholar. But still let the husbandman till his soil, and gather the harvest in its season; for the decree of the Almighty is that all must work, and "he who does the best his circumstance allows, does well, acts nobly, angels could do no more." Again, there is necessity for individual action from the fact that the task of making ourselves and those around us wiser and better is one which excludes none from aiding its completion. It is our common destiny, and there is a solemn responsibility resting on every man, independent of birth, wealth, and creed, to lend a helping hand in its fulfilment. This we owe to the past, and it is demanded of us by the present. We go back into ages which have passed away, and "whispering voices wafted by the breeze of populous centuries, come to us in solemn and mysterious sounds

to tell us of our duty." They make mention to us of the great and wise and good who have lived before us, and who labored hard to advance the cause of humanity. They remind us that we too should labor in the same cause. "We have entered into their harvest. We walked the green earth which they inhabited. We tread in their footsteps from which blessings grow. We can build forward where they ceased their toils, and bring nearer to perfection the great edifice which they left uncompleted. Then let not the past speak to us in vain, but armed with the strength of righteousness and truth, let us go forth into this quick world, with a determination, each in his respective sphere, to prosecute this all-glorious work with ungloved hands, and with firm, manly hearts; and when weary with the march of life, we feel our strength failing us, and we would fain forget our obligations to serve our kind, let the memory of these great men of antiquity renew in us our youth, and let us say with the poet,

"O, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only,
Such as these have lived and died."

The present too speaks to us in loud and mournful strains. Its voices like the war-trumpet give forth no uncertain sounds. They call us to the same sublime task of making individual exertion to improve the social and mental condition of our common brotherhood. The hard battle between ruth and error, between virtue and vice, between good and evil, is still going on, and it is a battle in which all may labor.

For there is no man, no matter what his position in life, who can not, if he will, exert a beneficial influence on society. Shakspeare spake the truth when he said,

"Nought so vile, that on the earth doth live,
But to the earth some special good can give."

Then let none doubt the wisdom of effort. We look forth upon the field of action, and we see many who in behalf of virtue are wielding their weapons like brave men. These beckon us to their aid, and invite us to share with them the pride and glory of the victory. Let them speak to none of us in vain. But let each and all of us contribute our share of good deeds to the general cause. The end of our being

is to bear witness to the truth, and to maintain its sanctity. It is for this that we live; and it is for this that we must render up an account of ourselves when we stand before the throne of God. It is this unanimity of thought and concert of action among men which produces a universal harmony, like to the music of the spheres. We hear it in the still watches of the night, and we know that it is the song of every star. Well spake her lover to the gentle Jessica,

"There's not the smallest orb, which thou beholdest,
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims."

Lastly, there should be individual action, from the reflection, that the result of labor is not confined to the laborer. "We behold around us one vast union in which no man labor for himself, without laboring at the same time for others—a glimpse of truth which by the universal harmony of things, becomes an inward benediction, and lifts the soul mightily upward; still more so when a man regards himself as a necessary member of this union. It is then that the feeling of our dignity and our power grows strong." It is then that life puts on its charms, and we look upon the earth as a bright, green, gladsome earth—"for it is then that we have comprehended our destiny."

TO ———

I think of thee at evening's close,
When the calm and mellow light,
Fades quietly and peacefully,
Upon the brow of night.

And as the fleeting sunshine
Forsakes the land and sea,
A brighter light comes o'er me,
The memory of thee.

I think of thee in darkness,
When night her sable wing
Has spread above the stream of life,
And hushed its murmuring.

But 'mid the reigning solitude,
The music of thy voice

Each silent chord of memory wakes,
And bids my heart rejoice.

And as the morn with golden beam,
Awakens dull repose,
And gilds the work of yesternight,
The dewdrop on the rose,—

So memory true to thee, recalls
Bright visions e'er they start,
And sheds around life's gloomiest shades,
The sunshine of the heart.

THE WORLD'S CONVENTION.

The assembling and alliance of the delegates from all Christendom, in London on the 19th August of last year, presents to the mind a magnitude of moral grandeur, such as the world, ancient or modern, was never before permitted to look upon. When science introduces us into the realms of creation, and permits us to behold numerous living worlds all obedient to the great law of gravity, conspiring to form a harmonious universe, the soul swells with the grandeur of the scene. Similar are our feelings when we contemplate this alliance justly called the world's convention. To it eaglet America sends up her delegation across three thousand miles of ocean wave—gay and vivacious France, alpine Switzerland, orthodox Scotland, the emerald Isle, England and Wales, the Germanic states, tropical Africa, and even the coral isles of the sea, send hither their delegations. The world's convention is formed, great and momentous questions are discussed and disposed of with love and unanimity, and notwithstanding there are so many sects in representation, yet there was no sectarian nor party flag displayed; but all obedient to the fundamental law of charity, consent to have unfurled the grand banner of Christendom, with *love* and *union* inscribed upon every flowing fold.

London has been an observer of many thrilling events. She has witnessed battle and victorious triumph. She has beheld the coronation of many kings and queens, and as many royal and princely beheadings. She has sought and

obtained wisdom from the oracles of the god-like Shakspeare, and the sublime epics of Milton. She has from time to time attended upon the grave assembling of the house of lords and listened, enraptured, to the eloquence of Pitt, Fox, Grattan, Burke and Brougham; but poets and historians will transmit the sublime fact to posterity, that the London convention of '46 was the crowning act in London's history.

The Congress of Vienna was a political alliance of the powers of Europe against their common foe—the bloody wars of modern times. Here was the delightful spectacle of kings and emperors laying aside their petty jealousies and national animosities, and uniting their strength and plighting their faith to preserve their crowns and individual nationality. This was a grave assembly and momentous was the occasion. But how narrow its basis, being selfishness, and circumscribed its object, self-preservation. But consider the London convention—how broad its platform, universal philanthropy—and how praiseworthy its object, being to heal the wounds inflicted on the body of Christianity, with unchristian weapons in christian hands; and to band together all christendom, not for ecclesiastical nor political purposes, but to march in solid phalanx, like the cavalcadors of Europe, against infidelity, atheism and the powers of darkness.

But one of the most pleasant reflections in connexion with this convention, is that it was the first grand triumph of that principle which lies at the foundation of all the philanthropic institutions of the day. A principle which sustains the arch of the bow of civilization, that spans the moral heavens as a token that our world shall never again be deluged with a flood of superstition. Nor is this principle an offspring of any of the many *'isms* of the day; but twenty centuries ago it was laid down as a *line divine*. Not imaginary as the equator around our earth, nor as the zodiacal path of the sun, traceable by great signs in the heavens, but a mystic, yet indelible line drawn by the inspiration of God upon the hearts of men. At first this line was short and dim, extending but along the sea of Galilee, and dividing but a few ignorant fishermen from a world of mankind. But ere long it traversed all India, extending from Dan to Beersheba. And in the course of time it stretched

across the seas and islands of the seas, till in fine it has been tied around our whole earth, dividing the human family into two grand divisions. No longer are the ignorant and ignoble separated by it—but the greatest geniuses that ever went through our world with wild glory, or quietly rose and blazed forth strangely, have been found on the good right side of this divine line.

Now after twenty centuries, an angry tide of mighty events have rolled over the generations of men, here swallowing up long cherished political and religious institutions, and there springing into being new systems; but amidst all that has arisen or fallen, this principle or the Nazarine system, now shines forth with meridian splendor. Yet notwithstanding there is much pleasure in contemplating the triumph, and great prevalence of this system, yet this pleasure is diminished by the sad fact that there are so many sects, who while they avowedly labor for the same great cause, yet labor in a manner as unholy as unwholesome consisting as it does in devouring with apparent gust, the creeds of other sister sects.

But this convention is not less interesting in a political point of view. The causes which lie at the foundation of the great events which tell for weal or woe on the destinies of man, are mainly twofold. By the operation of the one, kingdoms and empires are unsettled from repose, and a fearful upheaving is produced under the foundations of thrones and dynasties. But the other disturbs not with a rude and ruthless hand the political machinery of nations, nor the social organization of society; but is the secret working and evolving of great and immutable principles, which have foundation in the mind of man alone. The struggle of the American revolution and its issue, to the glory of our sires and the disenthralment of Columbia, may be adduced as an example of the influence of the one: but the secret influence of those moral causes which led to this new era in the calendar of liberty is an example of the other. But there is a third cause whose claims for influence must not be waived. It enthrones itself in the heart, softens down the asperity of our nature, and fosters all the gentle affections of the soul—its influence is heavenly. The one of these causes in its effects is like the volcano, which would dislocate the very frame work of our earth;

the other is like the combined influence of the breeze, shower, and genial beams of the sun; the third is like the diamond dew-drops of morning which would seem to have been distilled from the white stars in night time and without which the economy of nature would be imperfect.

When these three causes have a full and proportionate degree of influence upon nations and communities, then it is that they stand forth complete and perfect, presenting altogether the most grand spectacle in nature.

Earth's canopy when lighted up by the glorious king of day; or when jeweled, as a crown with stars; or when fringed around with rich forests gilded with the golden beams of the departing sun, presents beauty and grandeur in nature. Likewise if we could behold a nation abounding in all the resources of physical power; cultivated to the highest degree in science and every branch of knowledge; and if its whole extent be illumined with the mellow light beaming from the star of Bethlehem, it would present a scene of high moral grandeur. And that nation would possess the three elements, physical, moral, and religious which are the foundation of national perpetuity.

The ancient republics possessed the two first of these but wanted the third. Hence their comet-like career of unprecedented glory, terminated in a darksome night of monarchy. France possessed all of these elements, but blotted out the third. And thus brought upon herself that gloomy period when all the gentle affections of the soul were frozen into icicles, and when all that is poisonous in human nature, was warmed into a luxuriant growth. The issue was the guillotine and would have been national extinction had she not wooed and again embraced that principle she had so contumaciously cast off.

Justly then do some of our best statesmen regard the *World's Convention* as the harbinger of splendid events; seeing in it is they do, the first triumph of a great principle of governmental perpetuity, since Calvary was convulsed with the execution of its divine author. We want no better evidence of the triumph of freedom and free institutions than that afforded by the state of things in so many countries in the world necessary to this *convention of conventions*. And upon this occurrence alone we would hazard the opinion that the time will come when the transatlantic

watchword, *long live the king* ; or *God save the emperor*, will be forgotten and when our national air, *Hail Columbia* or *the Star Spangled Banner* will be shouted with American ecstasy on Britain's shores.

ORIGINALITY.

Much has been said in regard to the want of originality, manifest in the present age. But it is to be feared many brand a work with the stigma—*stale, unoriginal*, without considering, perhaps without knowing the elements of originality, and how far it is attainable and essential. It is not an easy task to define the bounds of originality. If by original we mean some truth never uttered forth before, and essentially new in its characteristics, few could be just claimants of the term. But when a man discovers something new in literature or art, which was hitherto unknown to himself or others as the work of any other, the fact that it was discovered in times past, and has been lost in the rubbish of centuries, should in no way detract from his fame ; the effort of mind and the depth of thought required in both cases is the same. Scheele and Priestley discovered oxygen almost simultaneously and independent of each other. Each deserves equal credit, full as much as if the other had not existed. This instance shows us how near we may be to truth, and how long arriving at it. The most important chemical element, the most universal constituent in nature, was a thing unknown four score years ago. In order to arrive at new truth, there must not only be the will to preserve, but the knowledge of the best methods of procedure. Truth is not as some would have us believe, a mere chance offspring of unconscious agents, a scintillation struck off by a casual blow, but rather the child of labor, long, patient and fervent, of deep meditation, combined with wide experience. This is the usual method of attaining knowledge in what was before unknown, and planting the "Excelsior" banner on the loftier heights of science: Plato and Aristotle were certainly original thinkers, and uttered many things far above the

bent of their contemporaries; but they so hampered themselves by artificial rules and unwarrantable methods, that error was often reached, instead of truth. Making self-communion all in all, and shutting out the light of experience, Plato, the magnificent visionary, was too often "in wandering mazes lost," and often unconsciously hindered the progress of knowledge. But those who have neglected that best of masters—experience—have returned empty-handed from their labors—so speaks history and so would antecedent probability suggest. When we consider how much has been written on every subject, and how much purporting to be new, is found on examination to be trite, we are tempted to exclaim with Israel's wisest king "the thing that hath been is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." This applied in a restricted sense is true; but there is room for originality, especially in regard to science. But the fact that there is so little of it, is a weighty reason why we should prize it when exhibited. Those pioneers of science who after mastering the circle of scientific knowledge rest not content, but go beyond the previously known and enlarge that circle, are the men of true original minds. While living and when dead they should be honored. How small is the catalogue of such? Pre-eminent among them stand the names of those bold, original thinkers, Newton, Kepler, Locke, and Franklin.

There is but one true Original. Creation in its every part owns God as its great First Cause. From nothing he called forth a world teeming with life and beauty. This was originality surpassing finite comprehension; no wonder that at such an exhibition "the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

Though the mind is so wondrous in its faculties that it is nobly adapted to investigate truths, yet *really* to originate, to create, is a thing beyond its power. The soundest metaphysicians tell us we are utterly unable to originate *on single idea*, not directly or indirectly from sensation and reflection. Man cannot soar above the world in which he is placed; the ultimate materials of his thoughts are all around him. "Poetic creations," though a term often used, is one of questionable correctness. It is for man to com-

bine and classify. Or as it has been beautifully expressed, "It is wise in man to name all novelty invention; for it is to find out things that are, not to create the unexisting; it is to cling to contiguities, to be keen in catching likeness, and with energetic elasticity to leap the gulf of contrast." But it is of originality in literature, we propose especially to speak. By it we mean in common parlance little more than novelty. Does a man wish fame in literature? let him eschew the part of the mere imitator, let him draw from a copious fountain within. If he wilfully plagiarizes he acts both immorally and inexpediently, for his fate will eventually be that of the jackdaw in the fable—exposure and disgrace. In reality, "the books that are books" are fewer than one would suppose. Comparing the number of books with what they really contain, how little do we find new, how much bearing the semblance of novelty is antiquated trash? How many books are cousin-germans of others? where one work of great merit appears, numerous are the imitators of it, shining like satellites in borrowed light. But let us not complain, for in every department there have been discoveries and not a little original thought displayed. It was to be expected, that the race of imitators in every branch of knowledge would be many, for man, as Aristotle says, is an animal most prone to imitation. The copy is rarely equal to the original. It falls short of it in freshness and in freedom and boldness of touch. The communer with nature, the close observer of human character in its many phases, will, *cæteris paribus*, be able to write a work of far greater originality and attraction than the mere compe of other mens' thoughts. When a youth, Walter Scott made frequent excursions among the Highlands of Scotland, listening to the legends of the peasantry and partaking of their hospitality. To this circumstance no doubt is due in great part those marks of a first copy that pre-eminently characterize the poems and novels of the "Wizard of the North." Some novels have scarcely anything *novel* but the name—not so with Scott's. Any author copying from nature cannot be called stale. The term is justly applied to those works which make no addition to our knowledge, but abound in truisms and common place remarks. Scott originated a new style of works differing

greatly from those of his predecessors; he sunk deep shafts in a new mine obtaining one of a peculiar and richer lustre. Though Homer and though Virgil had lived before, John Milton swept from epic heart notes *peculiar* to himself. "Soaring with no middle flight" he clothed the epic muse in the habiliments of religion and first caused her to mingle with her song the truths of revelation. If any may be called so, Milton was an original writer. Shall Shakspeare be forgotten when originality is the theme? By no means. He may be considered as the father of the modern drama and introduced much that was new and before untried into his plays. In his comedies the foibles of man are handled with such pith and nice discernment; in his tragedies the master passions are portrayed with such life and epic fire, that it were strange indeed! if his dramatic productions elicited not that interest and admiration which they do. The essential characteristic of genius is originality. It scorns mere imitation. It is the part of genius to accomplish results by means unusual and unseen by the common mind. A genius in any department implies self-reliance and a *mind that thinks for itself*. Napoleon Bonaparte was such an one. Never in the whole history of military affairs do we read of another so original, so efficacious in his mode of warfare—"he seemed born to command," he needed not to imitate.

In this connection let us for a moment consider that common assertion that book learning cramps the mind and is unfriendly to originality. If a person rests content with what books teach, and receive with monkish credulity all that they promulgate, it may be so—but there is no necessity for this. The inquirer after truth will search for it wherever it may be found—persuaded that he cannot rise to the unknown without mastering the previously known. How would the man of originality know where to direct his powers, and how to prepare himself properly for high achievements unless by thoroughly knowing what others had done and taught. Knowledge is the natural aliment of the mind, as appropriate to it as food is to the body; when rightly received so far from contracting, it nourishes it. Every writer and actor must be influenced and modified by the age in which he lives, but if he have sterling merit he

will not merely be passive, but will re-act on the age by something novel and peculiar to himself. The mere accumulation of facts without proper thought and digestion, far from tending to discipline or give the mind an original stamp has a contrary tendency. How often do we hear persons say the author no doubt speaks the truth, but he gives us nothing new, original. This, on many occasions is not fair censure but unreasonable discontent. On many subjects there is little scope for originality, and this we must consider. In those departments what we want is old truth acceptably presented. Valuable truth which has become almost obsolete or practically disregarded should be published on the house tops until unwilling ears are made to hear and reluctant hands made to do. Old truth is often despised because it is old. Therefore he who rescues it from threatened obscurity, and arrays it in the attractive garb of novelty, should not be taunted as unoriginal, but honored as a benefactor. Of this class of writers is Tupper, whose works have been a considerable addition to the literature of the day. But while original truth is only developed by the master few, and its onward march, sure and slow, how manifold, how startling are the manifestations of original error. How many plans in government, how many hypotheses in philosophy, have one by one deceived and perplexed mankind, having novelty as their only merit and attraction. But the very inconsistencies of error sometimes direct to the truth. Original error may sport for a time and poison the fountains of knowledge, but its reign is unstable. Hydra-headed as error is, more than one Hercules have been granted to vanquish and to crush it. "*Magna veritas, et prævalebit.*"

KNOWLEDGE OF SELF.

"Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see ourselves as ithers see us,
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
And foolish notion."

But very few men ever existed so enthusiastic in their

opinions in regard to their fellow beings as to demand for them perfection. It is true that a sect once arose, founded on this doctrine, and for a short time flourished; but the firmament of its anticipated prosperity and triumph now shows but a few dull glimmering stars. Notwithstanding the scarcity of those who inculcate the doctrine of possible universal perfection, the number of those who assert that of individual perfection is incalculably great. Man's natural selfishness and pride is unwilling to allow that his neighbor is perfect, but asserts it exclusively to himself. He loves to stand in the uppermost places in the synagogue and thank his God that he was not made as other men are. He ascends the lofty eminence of his own infallibility and gazes with admirable self-complacency on the living mass which is wallowing in the sewer of human frailties beneath him. He can easily see the mote which lies in his brother's eye, but cannot for the life of him, conceive that there may be a beam in his own. The Almighty is his counterpart, man his antipode.

Men are influenced by various motives in their short journey through life. But a principle which actuates the great mass of mankind is a desire for the good will of those by whom they may be surrounded. By this I do not mean that partisan popularity of modern times, which raises man to a higher eminence merely that when he falls he may be dashed into smaller fragments. Nor do I mean that fickle something the possessor of which at one moment finds himself gliding smoothly and triumphantly on the waves of popular favor, and at another buffeting with, and buffeted by the rude waves of popular indignation. It were but a sorry compliment to attribute such a motive to the actions of the universality of mankind. A desire of the good will of others is far higher, far nobler than this. It savors something of the divine essence. It alone is sufficient to show us that the image of God in which man was created, left on him one impression, which sin's corroding hand has been unable to obliterate. Its foundation is universal love "that blossom which maketh glad the garden of the heart." We search in the promiscuous crowd around us and endeavor to find some souls which beat in unison with our own. We endeavor to do good, and we wish that others might do good unto us. We love and we wish to be loved.

But the cavilling eye of man regard our minutest failings. We in our pride and self-sufficiency have long since convinced ourselves that we were paragons of perfection. Vices taking advantage of our neglect are daily gaining hold, and lie festering and burning in the heart. They will at length have become so numerous that our society is shunned as is the baleful upas. Friends lend no more a strong arm for support or a warm bosom for affection. We, helpless and alone are set adrift on the broad ocean of life, with but the hard-earned biscuit for sustenance, and the jug of self-sufficiency for consolation. It may be that now for a moment our misfortunes will dispel the clouds with which pride has encircled the inner man. Then thou

“Canst cast thy glance within
Regard that painted sepulchre the hovel of thy heart,
See with what foul imagery swarmeth that small chamber;
The bony hand of avarice filching from the poor
The lurid fires of lust, the idiot face of folly,
The sickening deed of cruelty, the foul, fierce orgies of the drunken,
Weak, contemptible vanity, stubborn, stolid unbelief
Envy's devilish sneer and the vile features of ingratitude.”

Then it is, we may cry out in very anguish and bitterness of soul:

“Oh had some power the giftie given me,
To see myself as others saw me,
It had from many a blunder freed me,
And foolish notion.”

But there are some for whom we need not offer this prayer. These are they who recognize nothing but self; who never look beyond the contracted sphere of their own corporeal nature, unless it be to add something to their personal aggrandizement. For them does the flattery songster warble his sweet notes; for them do the finny inhabitants of the sea flash and shoot about in their native element. For their individual pleasure alone are braved the perils of the mighty deep; for their sustenance does the husbandman toil and sweat as he tills the arid ground. For them does the lurid sun shine by day and the moon give forth her pale light by night. To gratify their love of the sublime did old nature ordain the huge, towering mountain, the unbridled torrent. They would be the only reality in a world of nonentities. But even in this rough, weed-run spot, our

universal principle is at work. Anxious though they be to secure their neighbors' esteem, they are unwilling to leave the path of error in order that they may gain it. Their bad habits are twined about them as the ivy on the oak. Wedded to their faults a divorce appears impracticable. A parent or some would-be-friend, whose watchful eye has long since detected the minutest failings of the heart, may expose its loathsome contents. But it would be a difficult matter to render us dissatisfied with ourselves. Happy in our condition, no possible change could be for the better. Of such it may truly be said :

"No power can e'er the giftie gie them,
To see themselves as ithers see them."

We have endeavoured in what we have written, to draw, as far as in us lies, a true picture of a large portion of mankind. We may appear to some to be rather censorious; but a little contemplation of the character of even our associates, will convince us that the truth has not been exaggerated. It is true, and we rejoice to say it, that this class does not comprise the whole of mankind. There are some, yes many, who have some heart for those about them. But they too have their faults, "few" though they be, "and far between," they are there still, and will exert their influence. Friends deceived by the multitude of their virtues overlook the vices which are festering beneath. Such are anxious to free themselves from their faults, but their innate, natural pride veils them from their view.

"Oh wad some power the giftie gie them,
To see themselves as ithers see them."

Mankind never was perfect. The bombast of a thousand pulpits has rung on our ears, as their occupants have described in glowing colors the beautiful garden of Eden, and talked of the heart of old Adam, "pure and spotless as the driven snow." But innocent and godlike as they represent him, before the cherubim with the flaming swords were ordained upon their mission, Adam had committed the crime of ingratitude, the foulest on the calendar of crimes. The patriarchs were no less faulty. Jacob lied and robbed his brother, the sweet singer of Israel for his sins was cursed by the judgment of God, and Samson in all his strength was

but a woman's toy. It is too late for us to talk of perfection. The testimony which comes to us from the lips of this hoary old world, white with the grey hairs of centuries on centuries should be sufficient to convince us to the contrary.

REMEMBRANCE.

Many an eve has come and gone,
Many a lingering twilight faded,
Many a lock grown old and grey,
That long ago this brow had shaded.

Many a tear has rose and vanished,
Many a smile has passed away,
Since my love and I were wandering,
All on a summer's day.

Silently we turned our footsteps,
By a deep and placid stream,
For well we knew the magic sadness,
Of loves bright sunny dream.

I looked into her deep blue eye,
Then gazed upon each murmuring wave,
And idly cast upon the tide,
The bloom the wild flower gave.

I smiled to see the buoyant thing
Float on the face of yon fair river,
And fondly thought o'er life's deep sea,
Young love might calmly sail forever.

But soon the cold and treacherous damp,
Dimmed the soft hue of nature's flower,
And love grew sad, as it beheld
The waters stern unpitying power.

I turned to that fair girl beside me,
And looked into her speaking eye,
And strove to ask from its fond glances,
If love could ever die.

But ah! the gay bewitching spell,
Drove Reason far away,
And on we wandered trustfully,
All on a summer's day.

But Time, relentless Time has told,
What love could ne'er have known,
And that frail flowerets early doom,
Was an emblem of my own.

My love was also wrecked and lost—
And the lady—where is she?
Sailing all bright and joyously
Upon a sunny sea.

But hush my heart—why vainly sigh,
O'er joys that cannot stay,
We only went a roving,
All on a summer's day.

HISTORY.

IN History is comprehended all that has transpired since our world became a world. It is a repository wherein is treasured the mysteries of a mighty past; a chronicle of the realities of ages long since engulfed in oblivion. By its aid and influence, mankind are enabled to wander amid the dark untenanted recesses of by-gone days, to trace the progress of humanity from time immemorial, and the circumstances connected with its alternate dignity and degradation. It is a record of experience which each generation bequeaths to a successive one. Its proper aim is the instruction of man, and in order to accomplish this it is of momentous importance that the facts be narrated with accuracy and truth. History is not merely a simple statement of facts, independent of a representation of their causes and a thorough investigation of their effects. No, both of these and likewise a clear development is indispensably necessary.

From the natural brevity of life we are unable to learn much from our own experience, and consequently derive but little benefit from it. Inconceivable advantages and a variety of instructions would arise from the possession of the experience of our ancestors, to obtain which, the dignified and responsible office of the historian is instituted. Possessed with full power he digs deep and brings forth mystic reminiscences of the past; he lingers amid the scenes of the world's proudest dramas, and divested of all factious spirit and

unyielding to affections, portrays a faithful sketch of humanity. How important is it, that he who aspires to perform the functions of this office should be fully conscious of its gravity and dignity, and make his appeals and addresses to our judgment rather than to our imagination. He should endeavor to lay aside all prejudice and impartiality, and viewing calmly and dispassionately the transactions of former times, record them in a manner best suited to their application for our benefit. All men can with justness claim a species of historic talent, for all are thus endowed by nature. Our common conversation is of the narrative style, and our minds are stocked with little occurrences, trivial perhaps, but ineffaceably recorded. No nature has ever existed, how blighted soever their moral condition, that has not paid due homage at the historic shrine. There appears to be implanted in the human breast, a desire to transmit to posterity a statement of the events which characterise their respective ages. We have a most striking exemplification of this in the aborigines of our country, than whom perhaps, a more illiterate portion of humanity never existed. We have undoubted testimony and assurance of the exact account they keep of their most prominent transactions. For the performance of any daring or hazardous feat, the hero or heroine is amply rewarded by having it emblazoned on some venerable forest tree, or carved on some lofty mountain cliff for the inspection of the living of after days. In fact all account we have of this singular, uncultivated race, is obtained from their rude hieroglyphics and the phonetic characters on their ancient graves and tumuli.

The historian in order that he may account for the conduct of some of his characters, must have quite an extensive knowledge of human nature. One of the primary virtues of history is that it should be clear, and in order to make it so, the author should endeavor to give the reader a general idea of the circumstances which may have a relation or connection with the event he is narrating. History recommends itself to us both as a pleasing and profitable study, and of course has pleasure and profit-seeking readers. It is a task which the intelligent mind at all times relishes, to revert to the past, so fraught with thrilling incident. It loves to linger around the scenes of other days, and amid the mingled ruins of thrones and tombs contemplate the frailty

of human glory. The mightiest empires of the world have yielded to the ruthless grasp of time, and now live only on the historic leaf.

As a republic we can view the causes of the downfall of others, and guarding against their errors, and deriving advantage from their experience, direct our course accordingly. Without history the past, pregnant with greatness and glory, would be enveloped in obscurity—a chaotic mass, as formless as the dim unknown future.

AFTON.

AN EPITAPH.

TRANSLATED FROM PETRARCH.

She was as true as the helm,
The ship's protecting guide ;
She was as faithful as a dog,
The lonely shepherd's pride ;
She was as firm as the shaft
That props the towering dome,
She was as sweet as to shipwrecked mariner
land and home—
She was as lovely as a child,
A parent's sole delight,
She was as radiant as the morn
That breaks a stormy night,
She was as grateful as streams
That in some wild recess,
With cooling rills
The panting traveller bless.

NOTE —The Editors' Table is necessarily omitted.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WE are sorry there is so little space allotted us for corresponding with those who have favored us with their contributions. But our number already contains its required thirty-six pages, and we fear to trespass farther on the time and patience of our readers. A *short* notice to our correspondents, however, will not, we trust, be a severe infliction, and this we hasten to give. And first, Dear Aristo, we favor you. Both of your articles have reached us—and had we room for more matter, your lines on Early Youth should have a place in our pages. You rhyme “*tolerably*” well and deserve to be encouraged. We also read your note requesting us to “notice in the Editors’ Table,” your second article, titled “The unfortunate Lover’s Lament.” As unambitious, however, as the request is, we cannot gratify it, as space is fast failing us. Another article bears the title, “Song of the Bachelor.” We will give you the note first, dear reader, as it explains the circumstances under which it was written.

“Gentlemen of the Editorial Chair; Sirs—It is with great trepidation and anxiety, that I now submit to your disposal the production of a spirit soured by mal-treatment; and it is my earnest and fervent hope that this may meet the eye of—shall I mention her—of my once dear Sal Smuggins, and that it may at least serve, somewhat, to humble her proud spirit, and teach her never again to trifle with the feelings of an inexperienced youth. Of course this is a confidential confession. N. C. M. J., (Nuff ced mong gentlemen.)”

Then follows the song which consists of some eight or ten verses. We can give only a part of them.

“ Oh, very little,
Or not a tittle
Do I myself care
For the sex called fair.

Oh, truly not much
Do I think of such,
As do captivate
Some youths' pate."

Our Bachelor then proceeds to tell us how he would "flee" from any of "the sex" should they attempt to kiss him.

"As from an adder I'd flee,
If they should try to kiss me.
And if I'm to be prest,
I've one single request,
That it may not be in the arms
Of a woman of charms,
Let me be clasped rather by the bear
Than the rose tipped arms of a lady fair."

But we forbear to give more of this truly chivalrous song. "A good hater" of women, this Bachelor, is he not? We advise him though, to consider well before he prefers the hug of a bear to that of a pretty girl. For it is a fact in natural history that bruin is a hard squeezer, and should they actually embrace we fear much for the consequence. 'Though it might not prove fatal after all. 'The author of such a song might be, in vulgar lingo, "considerable punkin" even in a bear fight." But we should have remembered that this confession was "confidential"—we beg pardon, dear Bachelor. Like Haidee,

———"We forgot,
Just in the very crisis we should not."

A.'s "Mary, Queen of Scots," is much too tame. It is indeed a species of blank verse, but contains but little poetry. All other communications are rejected.

THE EDITORS.